



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

ALEXANDRIA

NEWPORT NEWS

NORFOLK

RICHMOND

CHUCK ROSENBERG, UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 13, 2006

Jim Rybicki
Public Information Officer
Phone: (703) 842-4050 Fax: (703) 549-5202
E-Mail: usavae.press@usdoj.gov
Website: www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae

Further Information Contact:
Deanna Warren
Phone: (757) 441-6331

Bank Fraud Conspirators Plead Guilty

(Newport News, VA) – Braxton Bumpers, age 39, of Newport News, Virginia, pled guilty today to conspiracy and to one count of bank fraud. Bumpers, along with Patrick Archer and Sherrae Brown, were previously named in a twelve-count indictment with conspiring to commit bank fraud and bank fraud. Archer and Brown previously pled guilty to the conspiracy charge. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced the plea this afternoon.

According to court records, from January 2004 through March 2005, Bumpers, Brown, Archer, and others were involved in a bank fraud scheme operating in the Newport News area. During that time, Bumpers was incarcerated at Hampton Regional Jail in Hampton, Virginia and the Powhatan Correctional Facility in Powhatan, Virginia. To operate the criminal scheme, Bumpers coordinated with others, including Brown and Archer, by telephone and meetings at the prison facility. Through these efforts, Bumpers obtained a business license for a fraudulent business, a shell company, called "Kenya & Barry International" for use in opening bank accounts and to provide an air of legitimacy to checks written in the company's name.

Using the false business documentation, the co-conspirators opened up fraudulent Kenya & Barry International accounts. They then issued numerous fraudulent checks on the Kenya & Barry International accounts, knowing that there were insufficient funds in those accounts to cover the checks when they were cashed. Bumpers enlisted the assistance of others, including Brown and Archer, to recruit other individuals to cash or deposit the checks into their own legitimate personal accounts at other financial institutions. Because Bumpers was in prison, Brown and Archer assisted him by coordinating the deposits into the legitimate personal accounts and the subsequent withdrawal, or attempted withdrawal, of the stolen funds from those accounts.

The co-conspirators targeted banks and credit unions which would cash the checks or release the funds associated with those checks into other accounts without adequately verifying that the issuing account had sufficient funds to cover the checks. Once the deposits were made, the co-conspirators would withdraw or attempt to withdraw the funds associated with the fraudulent Kenya & Barry International check from the legitimate personal accounts. Upon receiving the proceeds, the money would be divided among the co-conspirators.

All of the defendants are facing up to five years in prison, \$250,000 in fines, and will be ordered to pay full restitution for the conspiracy convictions. As part of their guilty pleas, all of the defendants agreed to pay full restitution to their victims. Bumpers' guilty plea to the bank fraud charge exposes him to an additional thirty years in prison.

The investigation was conducted by the United States Secret Service in cooperation with the Newport News Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Michael Gill is prosecuting the case for the United States.

#